

*PLATYSTETHUS CORNUTUS* GRAVENHORST REPORTED  
FROM THE UNITED STATES IS *P. DEGENER*  
MULSANT AND REY (COLEOPTERA: STAPHYLINIDAE)

IAN MOORE

Division of Biological Control, University of California, Riverside, CA 92521

ABSTRACT

*Platystethus cornutus* Gravenhorst does not occur in the United States. The species recorded under that name is *P. degener* Mulsant and Rey.

Moore and Legner (1971) reported *Platystethus cornutus* Gravenhorst, a Palearctic rove beetle, for the first time from the United States: Nebraska. Moore later (1976) reported it from Ohio. It has recently (Holeski and Graves 1978) been included in a list of Ohio Coleoptera. Those records are based on misidentifications of *P. degener* Mulsant and Rey, a very similar species from the Palearctic.

Peter Hammond of the British Museum (Natural History) is preparing a world revision of the genus. He has examined our material and writes as follows: "The *Platystethus* turned out to be *P. degener* Muls. & Rey. Palearctic records of *cornutus* refer to a mixture of the two species—*cornutus* and *degener*, both very widely distributed, but *degener* more southern. I have not yet seen the true *cornutus* from North America, but have seen *degener* from some six or seven states, including some of which I collected myself last year near Milwaukee. The pattern of spread would seem to be from the east coast westward."

According to Hammond (1971): "In both forms of male the elytra are black or pitchy with an ill-defined testaceous patch on the disc. In true *cornutus*, this patch is more or less constant in form and runs diagonally across each elytron while in *P. degener* the patch is most usually confined to an area around the posterior sutural angle. In some specimens of *degener* the patch is more extensive but does not form a diagonal band, while in others the patch is largely obsolete or reduced to a slightly paler area around the posterior sutural angle."

As only *P. degener* is known from the United States, the key given by Moore and Legner (1971) will be sufficient for identification of the species with the substitution of the name *degener* for *cornutus*.

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